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ABSTRACT

Utilizing Talcott Parsons' data from a 1967 study of 4 South Texas counties, the present study involves 596 Mexican American high school sophomores and is based on Parsons' assertion that Spanish American subculture is characterized by the particularism-ascription value pattern. In keeping with this, the present study hypothesized that degree of identification with Mexican American subculture is inversely related to desire for upward intergenerational mobility. Ethnic identification was indicated by an index of the use of Spanish in a variety of situations, and aspiration for intergenerational mobility was measured through cross-classification of the respondent's long-run occupational aspirations with job of main breadwinner in his family. Comparative analysis of "upwardly mobile" and "nonmobile" respondents (by ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and sex) as well as comparison of ethnicity scores (by degree of mobility projected for each socioeconomic type by sex) did not support the hypothesis. A concluding discussion is presented of a number of alternatives and their theoretical implications as to whether language usage and occupational achievement could be possible indicators of Mexican American ethnicity. (Author/EL)

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STRENGTH OF ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION AND INTERGENERATIONAL MOBILITY ASPIRATIONS AMONG MEXICAN AMERICAN YOUTH*

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Abstract

Taking off from an assertion of Talcott Parsons that the Spanish American subculture is characterized by the particularism-ascription value pattern, we hypothesized that degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture is inversely related to desire for upward intergenerational mobility. We could locate no findings from past research that offered direct evidence for or against this hypothesized relationship. Data lending itself to a test of this hypothesis were available from a 1967 study of about 600 Mexican American high school sophomores from South Texas. Ethnic identification was indicated by an index of the use of Spanish in a variety of situations. Aspiration for intergenerational mobility was measured through cross-classification of the respondents' long-run occupational aspirations with job of main breadwinner in his family. Comparative analysis of "upwardly mobile" and "nonmobile" respondents by ethnicity, SES, and sex and comparison of ethnicity scores by degree of mobility projected for each SES type by sex did not support our hypothesis. At the same time, in reference to boys, consistent but slight differences in the predicted direction were observed. An extension of our analysis demonstrated that "high" or "low" extremes in ethnicity did not generally differentiate the mobile from the nonmobile.

Preliminary analysis of the variables involved provided some interesting results: about three-fourths of the respondents desired upward generational mobility, girls consistently utilized English to a greater extent than boys, and use of Spanish for all youth differed situationally in a patterned way.

Relevant theoretical implications were drawn and suggestions made for future research.

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THE PROBLEM

An increasing amount of research interest is being devoted to the problem of the Mexican American minority group in our society by sociologists. The Mexican American poses an interesting area of investigation as an ethnic minority demonstrating a great deal of apparent resistance to assimilation into the mainstream of our modern society; although many Mexican Americans have resided in the United States for three generations or more, they have had a tendency to maintain the patterns of their culture of origin relative to language, religion, family values, aesthetics, etc.[1] On the other hand, recent research has demonstrated that Mexican American youth today -- like youth of all kinds in our society -- maintain generally high aspirations and expectations for status achievement.[2] This evidence tends to overshadow the fact that substantial proportions of Mexican American youth do not reflect the dominant achievement ethos of our society in their status aspirations.[3] Could these differences in level of aspiration be related to whether or not, or to what extent, the Mexican American has dissociated himself from his ethnic subculture? We intend to explore this question using data from a recent Texas study of Mexican American high school sophomores.

Framework

Parsons' scheme of pattern variables as they apply to cultural differences in value orientations provide a theoretical frame of reference for the question posed above.[4] Parsons has stated that the difference between the universalism-achievement combination of value orientations and the particularism-ascription combination represents an important distinction between the Spanish American subculture and the larger society of the United States.[5] Others have supported the

view that the Mexican American subculture is characterized by the particularism-ascription type, with the correlated emphases on importance of family life, reliance on tradition, diffuse relations, short-run orientation toward need gratification, etc.[6] On the other hand, several relatively recent studies by Nall and Zurcher, et. al., have produced findings apparently bringing into question the general validity of Parsons' assertion relative to Mexican Americans; however, in our judgment neither study clearly refutes the proposition.[7]

It seems logical to infer that, in general, those people operating in reference to the particularism-ascription value set will not be as desirous of social achievement as others identifying with the opposed value pattern. Those that do desire social achievement will not be as inclined to seek it through occupational advancement, which is largely regulated by universalistic criteria (i.e. education and length of experience).

Research Objective

Assuming that the Mexican American subculture is characterized by a pattern of particularism-ascription as opposed to a pattern of universalism-achievement in the dominant culture of the United States, we propose that Mexican Americans having a strong identification with the ethnic subculture will have less desire for upward vertical mobility through occupational attainment than those less strongly identified with the ethnic subculture. Consequently, we intend to test the following hypotheses, within the limits of our data: that the degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture is inversely associated with the desire for upward intergenerational occupational mobility.

As operationalized here, ethnic identification is indicated by use of Spanish (as opposed to English) in a variety of situations and aspiration for intergenerational mobility is indicated by the respondent's long-run occupational

aspiration relative to the job of the main breadwinner in his family. We will discuss these operations in considerable detail later. However, first we will examine relevant past research.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

To the knowledge of the authors, there is little research to date which deals with Mexican American ethnicity in other terms than a simple distinction of Mexican Americans from others, and we only located one study relating measures of ethnicity to aspirations. A study by Krass, et. al., dealing with the assimilation of urban adults included ethnicity and aspirations among the variables, and found no correlation between them.[8] However, as there is no description of either the measure of ethnicity or of aspirations, it is impossible to evaluate this finding. In addition, Rubel reports from his study of a Mexican American community in South Texas that young people correlate the development of English language skills with opportunity for improvement of job and income status.[9]

Nall, in a cross-cultural study of role expectation, hypothesizes that ethnic identification may be measured through use of the Spanish language with peers and derives three subgroups on the basis of this measure: English-speaking, Spanish-speaking, and bi-lingual.[10]

Given that language usage provides a valid indicator of ethnicity and the fact that little past research cogent to our concerns exists, a more extensive review of research relating language patterns of Mexican Americans to other variables was deemed useful. Mahoney studied the language choices of rural and urban household heads and their children in a variety of contexts.[11] She found that in general, urban Mexican Americans use more English than do rural Mexican Americans. She also observed that English is inversely correlated

with age and positively correlated with education, American birth, income, and occupational level of household head. A paper by Skrabanek based on the same research project points out that the Spanish language is widely retained even though its use decreases with age.[12] He also indicates that, while the above mentioned correlations reported by Mahoney do exist, the population studied was very homogeneous in reference to these characteristics.[13] Peñalosa, in a study of Mexican American adults in an urban center of Southern California, also found that English language preference was correlated with higher income, higher ranking occupation, younger age, and later generation.[14] In another report based on the same research, he analyzed social mobility and found that the upwardly mobile do, in fact, use much less Spanish than the non-upwardly mobile.[15]

These findings consistently suggest that use of English, as opposed to Spanish, among Mexican Americans is related to factors ordinarily associated with disengagement from ethnic identification and with factors indicative of vertical social mobility. At the same time, we could locate no useful empirical findings from past research directly bearing upon our major concern -- the relationship of degree of ethnic identification to aspirations for intergenerational mobility.

SOURCE AND COLLECTION OF DATA

The data for this paper were obtained from interviews with high school sophomores attending school during the Spring of 1967 in four Texas counties close to the Mexican border -- Dimmit, Maverick, Starr, and Zapata.[16] These counties were selected to include high proportions of Mexican Americans, low-income families, and rural, nonmetropolitan residents as compared with Texas as a whole. In all four, the education of adults over 24 averaged only 5-6 years, agricultural employment accounted for the major portion of the labor force, and the skilled

force was much smaller than the unskilled.

The seven high schools in these four counties exhibited a great deal of variability in size, in types of curricula available, in dropout rate, in counseling programs, and in numerous other characteristics. In general, the sophomore class was heavily Mexican American and devoid of Negroes.[17]

Out of the 669 respondents interviewed in these 7 schools, 596 identified themselves as Mexican Americans and constituted the study population for this investigation. In general, respondents reported the following family characteristics: 1) large family size with the major money earner being the father; 2) low level occupation of the major wage earner, e.g. farm laborer or laborer; 3) both parents present and the mother not working outside the household; 4) low level of parental educational attainment.[18]

The interviews were group-administered by trained graduate students -- one of whom read each stimulus question aloud as the respondents answered it. The respondents were guaranteed that their responses would be kept confidential. The amount of time for the administration of the questionnaires ranged from 35 to 70 minutes; particular care was taken to see that the pace of administration was suited to the ability of the particular group of students being interviewed. Only those students who were present on the day of the interview (90% of those enrolled) were included in the study.

Of the 596 Mexican American youth interviewed, 71 were excluded for purposes of analysis due to lack of information on one or more of the three key variables involved -- breadwinner's job, occupational aspiration, and ethnic identification index -- leaving a total of 252 boys and 274 girls for our investigation.

INDICATORS, MEASUREMENT, PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Ethnic Identification Index

As a means of obtaining an indicator for degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture, we attempted to structure an array of language usage items that would span the variety of life situations our respondents were likely to experience. We assumed then, taking a lead from an earlier investigation by Nall, that the extent to which Spanish was spoken in comparison with English would provide an index of identification with the Mexican American subculture.[19] While Nall relied simply on language used with peers and developed a trichotomy of ethnic identification, we used five situationally structured items and developed a more refined index. The first three items used asked the respondent to indicate which language he used with parents, with close friends in school by circling one of three alternatives: English, Spanish, or Same Amount of Both. The remaining two questions pertained to mass media consumption patterns and asked the respondent to indicate, relative to radio and newspapers and magazines, the proportion of Spanish language media used by marking one of the following alternatives: None, Some, More Than Half, or All. Exact replicas of the questions are given in APPENDIX A and the distribution of the responses on these individual items are provided in APPENDIX B - Part 1.

In order to develop a single index score of use of Spanish, and derivatively, of degree of ethnic identification, each of the items was scored as follows:

(1) Language used with parents, with friends in neighborhood, and with friends in school (3 items).
    English = 1
    Same Amount of Both = 3
    Spanish = 5

(2) Spanish language radio and literature (2 items).
    None = 1
    Some = 3
    More than Half or All = 5 [20]

The unweighted sum total of the individual scores was then taken as an index measure of degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture. This procedure provided a scale of measures with a potential range in scores from 5 (lowest degree of identification) to 25 (highest degree of identification), Table 1. The range of actual scores realized this potential and approximated a normal curve, skewed slightly toward the high end. The mean score for all students was equal to the midpoint of the range, but was slightly higher for males than for females.

Patterns of Language Usage

Because this data is not reported elsewhere, and because it may have utility to others, we feel a few preliminary words describing our findings on the situationally specific utilization of Spanish and English by these respondents are in order. See APPENDIX B - Part 1 for tabular presentations relevant here.

Surprisingly, males and females differed significantly in the use of Spanish in reference to all three types of informal relations explored. Boys more frequently than girls spoke Spanish with their parents, with close friends in the neighborhood, and with close friends in school. At the same time, both boys and girls showed a consistent pattern of substantial reduction of use of Spanish when moving from the home, to the neighborhood, and to school. For instance, a third as many spoke Spanish with friends in school as with parents. A converse pattern exists for speaking English -- four times as many spoke English in school as with parents at home -- and a similar but less marked pattern exists for use of the same amount of both languages.

In reference to mass media patterns, sex differences do not exist relative to radio and are of minor significance relative to mass literature. Only about one-fifth of the respondents indicated listening mostly or only to Spanish

Table 1. Distribution of Ethnic Identification Scores of Mexican-American Youth by Sex.

Ethnic Identif. Scores	Male (N=289)	Female (N=307)	Total (N=596)
	percent		
(Low)			
5	2	4	3
7	3	6	4
9	4	6	5
11	6	10	9
13	15	14	14
15	18	19	19
17	17	14	16
19	18	13	15
21	11	7	9
23	4	4	4
25	2	3	2
TOTAL	100	100	100
No information	1	0	1
Mean	16.1	14.9	15.5

language radio and very small proportions indicated reading only Spanish language literature. While most respondents indicated bilingual patterns in radio listening, a majority of respondents read only English language newspapers and magazines. This difference may be due to the fact that while the respondents learn to speak Spanish, relatively few learn to read or write the language. At the same time, all learn to read and write English in school.

Occupational Mobility Aspirations

Almost all studies of occupational aspirations of young people have been concerned with simply determining level (high or low) of aspiration in terms of arbitrary distinctions along some presumed unitary continuum of rank.[21] The disadvantage of this procedure is that it overlooks the status (class) origin of the respondents -- for instance, of two youth having similarly high job aspirations but differing in class of origin, the lower class youth would desire greater upward mobility than the other. We are interested in determining whether or not our respondents are projecting upward mobility. Consequently, we followed the lead of Stephenson in attempting to measure aspiration for intergenerational mobility ("mobility aspiration") among our respondents.[22]

Operationalization of this concept involved cross-classification of the respondents on similar measures of level of job aspiration and of main breadwinner's occupation. A free response question asking the respondent to indicate what he would most desire as a lifetime job elicited responses used to indicate aspiration. Also, responses were obtained to a question asking the students to indicate the principle job of the main breadwinner in his household, which in a large majority of cases (76%) was the student's father. Both of these stimulus questions are provided in APPENDIX A. The responses to both were classified

according to a modified form of the commonly used Alba Edwards Census Scheme. A table abstracted from an earlier detailed analysis of the mobility aspirations of our respondents by Wright, serves to illustrate this operation and provides percentage distributions of respondents; for a brief description of this variable, Table 2.[23]

Approximately three-fourths of both male and female Mexican Americans indicated a desire for upward intergenerational occupational mobility.[24] Furthermore, most of the respondents desired an occupation three or more levels above the level of their families-of-orientation. David Wright, in an earlier detailed analysis of these data, remarked upon a major tendency "that large proportions of the respondents desired professional or other high level jobs regardless of the occupational levels of the respondents' families-of-orientation."[25] This means that the rate of occurrence and magnitude of upward vertical mobility were inversely related to SES level of family.

ANALYSIS: ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION AND MOBILITY ASPIRATION[26]

This section reports analysis of our data testing the hypothesis that degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture is inversely related to frequency of occurrence and to magnitude of aspirations for intergenerational occupational mobility.

We decided to control on socio-economic status in our statistical analysis, because family rank importantly influences occurrence and limits the extent of aspiration for upward mobility, and because past research demonstrated that SES is inversely related to our indicator of degree of ethnic identification.[27] Our research design consists of two major stages aimed at determining the nature of the association existing between degree of ethnic identification (hereafter

Table 2. Generational Occupational Mobility Aspirations: A Cross-Classification of the Occupational Aspirations of Mexican American Males and Females by Occupation of Respondents' Head-of-Household.[1]

Part A. MALES

Occupation of Respondent's Head-of-Household	No.	Respondent's Occupational Aspiration: High Prof.	Low Prof.	Glamour	Managerial	Cler.-Sales	Skilled	Operatives	Unskilled	Other	Total
		PERCENT									
High Prof.	16	25	63	--	6	--	--	6	--	--	100
Managerial	41	22	34	5	12	5	15	5	2	--	100
Cler.-Sales	24	25	29	4	8	13	13	4	4	--	100
Skilled	39	8	20	13	8	8	41	2	--	--	100
Operatives	37	--	43	3	5	14	27	5	3	--	100
Unskilled	87	6	36	8	8	9	18	5	10	--	100

Part B. FEMALES

High Prof.*	24	8	59	4	--	25	4	--	--	--	100
Managerial	49	2	55	4	--	29	10	--	--	--	100
Cler.-Sales	31	--	48	11	--	32	3	3	--	3	100
Skilled	53	7	51	6	2	23	7	2	--	2	100
Operatives	27	--	59	11	--	30	--	--	--	--	100
Unskilled	80	2	49	5	2	34	8	--	--	--	100

*Includes 1 Low Professional

[1]This table is taken from an unpublished Master's thesis: David E. Wright, Jr., "Occupational Orientations of Mexican American Youth In Selected Areas of Texas", Texas A&M University, August, 1968, p. 80.

referred to as "ethnicity") and rate of occurrence and magnitude of mobility aspiration by SES (as indicated by main breadwinner's job) and sex. The stages of analysis consist of the following comparisons:

(1) A comparison of respondents who aspire to upward mobility ("mobile") with those who do not ("nonmobile") on mean ethnicity scores by sex and SES.

(2) A comparison among mean ethnicity scores of SES-aspiration groupings formed by a cross-classification of SES categories and levels of occupational aspiration by sex.

Mobile vs. Nonmobile

The comparison between the upwardly mobile and nonmobile boys on mean ethnicity scores, indicates differences in the predicted direction for every SES category, except skilled blue collar, Table 3. However, the differences were relatively small -- the greatest difference in means was 2.5 -- and were not significant statistically. For the girls, only the managerial SES category demonstrated a difference in the expected direction and the difference was not statistically significant. Consequently, it must be concluded that, in general, regardless of class of origin, our hypothesis predicting an inverse relationship between ethnicity and rate of occurrence of aspiration for intergenerational mobility was not supported. At the same time, the relative consistency of direction of difference in mean scores among the boys, indicates the need to explore this hypothesis further.

On the chance that the relatively small differences, and lack of differences in some cases, might be explained by our combination of those projecting downward mobility and those projecting no change in status in the single "nonmobile"

Table 3. Mean Ethnic Identification Score of Mexican American Boys and Girls by Intergenerational Mobility Aspiration and Socio-Economic Status.

Job of Main Breadwinner	Projected Mobility			
	Boys		Girls	
	Non-Mobile	Upward Mobile	Non-Mobile	Upward Mobile
	mean score			
Upper Class:				
Professional	12.7	—	14.0	--
Managerial	16.8*	15.0	15.0*	12.0
Middle Class:				
Clerical & Sales	17.0*	14.6	15.2	15.0
Skilled Blue-Collar	15.7	15.8	13.7	13.7
Lower Class:				
Operatives	18.3*	17.2	--	15.3
Unskilled & Unemployed	18.5*	16.0	--	15.7

*Difference between Non-Mobile and Upward Mobile groupings not significant statistically at the .50 level of P using the "t" test for difference between means.

category, we extended our analysis by separating these two groupings and comparing them with the upwardly mobile -- the tabular comparisons are given in APPENDIX C. The results were essentially the same as in the previous analysis.

Magnitude of Mobility Aspiration

In interpreting the results of our comparison of ethnicity in terms of the cross-classification of respondents by level of aspiration and SES, one should be warned that most of the contingency cells hold relatively small numbers of respondents. Tables of frequencies (paralleling Tables 4 and 5) are given in APPENDIX B - Part 2.

Excluding children from households headed by a professional -- who could not experience upward mobility in terms of our measurements -- contrary to our hypothesis, most SES groupings of boys did not demonstrate a clear and consistent inverse relationship between ethnicity and the magnitude of upward mobility desired, Table 4. Exceptions to this existed in reference to boys from farm and unskilled blue collar families. Again, no marked or consistent patterns could be observed in reference to the girls on this comparison, Table 5.

Extended Analysis

Because of the generally small differences in the predicted direction observed for boys in the previous analysis, we decided to extend our investigation to see how extremes in ethnicity (as indicated by our scores) were related to mobility aspiration. In order to do this, we took the set of scores representing the 15% of our respondents with highest and lowest ethnicity and differentiated them from the remainder; this procedure provided three classes of ethnic identification -- Low (scores of 11 and below); High (scores of 21 and above); Intermediate (the residual -- 12 through 20).

Table 4. Mean Ethnic Identification Score of Mexican American Males by Occupational Aspiration and Main Breadwinner's Job.

Main Breadwinner's Job	Occupational Aspiration							
	High Prof.	Low Prof.	Glamour	Manager.	Clerical & Sales	Skilled B. C.	Unskilled	Total
	Mean Score							
Professional	14.5	11.8	11.0	15.0	--	--	13.0	12.7
Managerial	16.1	13.4	21.0	17.5	--	15.0	17.0	15.6
Cler. & Sales	14.0	14.7	13.0	17.0	16.3	18.3	16.0	15.4
Skilled B. C.	17.0	15.3	16.6	15.0	15.0	15.9	13.0	15.7
Operatives	--	15.8	15.0	19.0	18.6	18.6	18.3	17.3
Unskilled	15.6	15.1	15.0	15.8	16.8	17.8	18.5	16.4
Farmers	17.0	15.4	15.0	15.0	19.0	19.0	25.0	17.5
TOTAL	15.5	14.7	15.5	16.4	17.1	17.4	18.0	16.1

Table 5. Mean Ethnic Identification Score of Mexican American Females by Occupational Aspiration and Main Breadwinner's Job.

Main Breadwinner's Job	Occupational Aspiration							
	High Prof.	Low Prof.	Glamour	Manager.	Clerical & Sales	Skilled B. C.	Unskilled	Total
	Mean Score							
Professional	15.0	13.3	9.0	--	15.9	15.0	--	14.0
Managerial	--	12.0	12.0	--	13.0	18.5	--	13.0
Clerical & Sales	--	14.2	19.0	--	16.2	7.0	14.0	15.1
Skilled B. C.	12.0	13.6	8.3	23.0	15.2	13.0	15.0	13.3
Operatives	--	14.8	15.0	--	16.5	--	--	15.3
Unskilled	11.0	15.8	15.4	18.0	16.0	15.0	--	15.7
Farmers	25.0	13.6	--	--	18.1	19.0	--	16.6
TOTAL	13.9	14.2	13.9	19.7	15.9	15.1	14.5	14.8

Table 6. Mobility Aspiration of Mexican American Boys by Level of Ethnic Identification.

Mobility Aspiration	Ethnic Identification Level		
	Low (N=27)	Intermediate (N=133)	High (N=34)
	percent		
Lower	0	4	0
None	11	20	18
Higher	89	76	82
TOTAL	100	100	100

$x^2 = 4.18$ df = 4 $.30 < P < .50$

Table 7. Ethnic Identification Level of Boys of Blue-Collar Parents Aspiring to Either Blue Collar of White Collar Jobs.

Ethnic Identif.	Job Aspirations of B. C. Boys	
	Blue Collar (N = 62)	White Collar (N = 106)
	percent	
High	23	14
Intermediate	69	70
Low	8	16
TOTAL	100	100

$x^2 = 3.51$ df = 2 $.10 < P < .20$

Table 8. Ethnic Identification Level of Boys of Nonprofessional White Collar Parents Having Aspirations for Professional or Other Jobs.

Ethnic Identif.	Job Aspirations of Nonprof. W. C. Boys	
	Professional (N=29)	Other (N=20)
	percent	
High	24	20
Intermediate	45	80
Low	31	0
TOTAL	100	100

$x^2 = 8.77$ df = 2 $.01 < P < .02$

First, we simply compared these three groupings of respondents on whether they projected intergenerational mobility or not, Table 6. The results indicate a lack of significant differences. We interpret this to mean that extreme high or low ethnicity did not influence whether or not the respondent would project upward mobility.

Next, we decided to carry this line of investigation one step further by differentiating qualitatively different types of family status and of occupational aspiration and then relating a few selected combinations of these to the three ethnic identification classes described above. In this regard, we first looked at boys from blue collar homes and differentiated them on whether they aspired to white collar jobs or not. Are extremes in ethnic identification related to blue collar youth aspiring to the white collar class? Our results indicate that they might be, but again the differences are too small to get excited about, Table 7. What about lower prestige white collar youth? Are extremes in ethnicity related to their desire to step up to professional jobs? Definitely, yes, almost a third of these respondents desiring to become professionals had extremely low ethnicity scores as compared with none of the others, Table 8. This finding apparently means that, for youth from lower prestige white collar families, extreme disengagement from the Mexican American subculture is a necessary prerequisite for aspiring to the professional class.

From the results of the extended analysis, we conclude that the extreme lack of identification with the Mexican American subculture may well be meaningfully related to certain qualitative patterns of desired mobility (i.e. B.C. to W.C., Lower prestige W.C. to Professional) -- this is a hypothesis worthy of further investigation.

DISCUSSION

Several reasonable alternatives exist to explain our failure to support our major hypothesis within the limits of the data at hand. These involve assumptions of a theoretical nature,and those involved in our research operations as well as limitations inherent in our study population. In the discussion to follow we will assess the plausibility of a number of these alternatives and present the implications of our findings.

First, is it logical to infer that subjects operating in reference to a particularism-ascription value set are not likely to be oriented toward inter-generational mobility through occupational achievement? We think so and are aware of no theory or existing body of empirical knowledge to question this. A more likely but, in our estimation, still not probable explanation might rest in our acceptance of Parsons' assertion that the Spanish American subculture is characterized by the particularism-ascription set.[28] Empirical evidence exists in great quantity to support this.[29] Assuming that both of these assertions are valid, then we must look to our operations (i.e. indicators and measurements) for an explanation.

Logically, the next possible explanation for our failure to support the hypothesis is that language usage patterns do not represent good indicators of Mexican American ethnicity.[30] But this explanation flies in the face of Rubel's observations and findings from Nall's survey analysis, both of which involved populations similar to ours. Peñalosa's findings from a study of mobile and nonmobile adults, along with other previously noted studies establishing a positive correlation between SES and use of Spanish, lend additional evidence against this explanation.[31] Still, one wonders if language usage patterns (when

used alone) are the best conceivable indicators of ethnic identification among these people; however, any answer given here would be highly speculative due to lack of cogent research. We suggest that future researchers attempting to measure degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture consider the dimensions of the social fabric other than, or in addition to, language.[32]

Assuming that language patterns can be used as effective indicators for Mexican American ethnicity, questions still could be raised about the particular indicators and measurements used here. It may be that our indicators are too gross to tap the critical aspects of language for the purpose intended: they simply refer to predominant use of one language vs. the other. We suggest that any researcher attempting to use language as a measure of ethnicity consider the qualitative nature of the language used -- fluency, degree of accent, and breadth of vocabulary of English and/or Spanish. Another possibility is that our index measure may be too complex; Nall found that use of Spanish vs. English with peers differentiated well among his respondents, while usage with parents did not as use of Spanish predominated in the home. On the other hand, use of English prevailed in mass media consumption among our respondents. Thus, while our multiple item scale provides greater and more refined differentiation than any single item would, it may include items having opposing reflections of ethnicity that tend to cancel each other. We intend to check this possibility through continued analysis of our data, even though at present we do not consider it a likely explanation for our results.

Finally, as always for good empiricists, there is the question of the ability to generalize broadly from a rather limited and small study population. The nature of the results reported may be due to some unique aspects of the particu-

lar population studied here; studies of Mexican Americans living in other regions and/or in large metropolitan centers might provide different results. Lacking any useful past research for comparison, this question can only be answered through future research.

Even though we have reviewed possible weaknesses and limitations of this research that could explain our negative findings, the obvious conclusion of our work -- that degree of identification with the Mexican American subculture does not generally influence the frequency of occurrence or the magnitude of intergenerational mobility projected by youth -- stands as a provocative hypothesis until refuted by other research.[32]

In addition to the theoretical and methodological implications drawn above, the findings on language usage patterns contribute additional information to check the general validity of some past findings and extend our limited body of empirical knowledge in this problem area.

Our findings are consistent with those provided from earlier efforts by Mahoney and Skrabanek, indicating a definite pattern of use of Spanish vs. English in different social situations. Like that of the above two studies, our data shows successively less use of Spanish as the context shifts from the home to the neighborhood, to the school. This trend continued as one moved from these informal, social contexts to the more impersonal mass media. The inference to be drawn here is that most Mexican Americans are bilingual -- they retain the use of at least verbal Spanish -- but that they differentially use one or the other language depending upon the degree of primacy involved in the social situation.

As far as we know, our findings are the first to clearly demonstrate that male-female differences exist in language usage patterns: in the informal social situations examined, the males were much more likely to use Spanish than the

females. The nature of this observed sex difference surprised us, in that we expected the females to be more tradition oriented than the males. This finding could be interpreted to mean that females are disengaging faster than males from the traditional Mexican American subculture, in which case some redefinition of values and sex roles may be occurring. If this interpretation is valid, it would be appropriate to investigate factors drawing the female strongly toward the dominant English-speaking culture. Could it be that the subculture with its traditional emphasis on "machismo" is more attractive to the male, while the more equalitarian Anglo culture attracts the female? This question suggests an interesting and fruitful realm for future research. The development of refined means of indicating and measuring language usage patterns would be valuable in exploring these ideas.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ozzie G. Simmons, "The Mutual Images and Expectations of Anglo-Americans", Daedalus, (Spring, 1961), pp. 286-299; and Arthur J. Rubel, Across the Tracks: Mexican Americans in a Texas City, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966.

2. For findings on level of aspiration of Mexican American youth as compared with similar Negro and Anglo youth, and for a review of other relevant research, see the paper that we (Kuvlesky, Wright, and Juarez) presented at the 1969 Southwestern Sociological Association meetings, "Status Projections and Ethnicity: A Comparison of Mexican American, Negro, and Anglo Youth". A copy of this paper will be provided upon request of the senior author.

3. Recent research indicates that many Mexican American youth do not aspire to what are normally considered high level occupational or educational aspirations (i.e., high prestige white collar jobs and college graduation). See the following for evidence: Kuvlesky, et. al., "Status Projections and Ethnicity..."; Celia S. Heller, Mexican American Youth at the Crossroads, New York: Random House, 1966; Arturo DeHoyos, "Occupational and Educational Levels of Mexican American Youth", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1961; and Herschel T. Manuel, Spanish-Speaking Children of the Southwest: Their Education and Public Welfare, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965.

4. See Rumaldo Juarez's development of this relationship in an unpublished Master's thesis, "Educational Status Orientations of Mexican American and Anglo Youth in Selected Low-Income Counties of Texas", Texas A&M University, August, 1968. For a discussion of the use of the pattern variables in reference to cultural values see: Talcott Parsons and Edward A. Shils, eds., Toward a General Theory of Action, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, pp. 76-79 and 411-412.

5. Talcott Parsons, The Social System, New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1951, p. 199.

6. See references cited in Footnote 1 among others.

7. Frank C. Nall II, "Role Expectations: A Cross-Cultural Study", Rural Sociology, 27(March, 1962), pp. 28-41; and Louis A. Zurcher, et. al., "Value Orientation, Role Conflict, and Alienation from Work: A Cross Cultural Study", American Sociological Review, 30(August, 1965), pp. 539-548.

8. Elaine M. Krass, Claire Peterson, and Lyle W. Shannon, "Differential Association, Cultural Integration, and Economic Absorption Among Mexican Americans and Negroes in a Northern Industrial Community", Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, 47(December, 1966), pp. 239-252.

9. Arthur J. Rubel, Across the Tracks: Mexican Americans in a Texas City, University of Texas Press, 1966, p. 11.

10. Nall, p. 37.

11. Mary Mahoney, "Spanish and English Language Usage by Spanish-American Families in Two South Texas Counties", unpublished Master's thesis, Texas A&M University, January, 1967.

12. R. L. Skrabanek, "Language Maintenance Among Mexican Americans", unpublished paper, Texas A&M University, 1969, p. 6.

13. Skrabanek, p. 10.

14. Fernando Peñalosa and Edward C. McDonagh, "A Socio-Economic Class Typology of Mexican Americans", Sociological Inquiry, 36(Winter, 1966), p. 24.

15. Fernando Peñalosa and Edward C. McDonagh, "Social Mobility in a Mexican American Community", Social Forces, 44(July, 1966), p. 498.

16. For greater detail concerning the specific characteristics of the counties, see David E. Wright, Jr., "Occupational Orientations of Mexican American Youth in Selected Texas Counties", unpublished Master's thesis, Texas A&M University, 1968, pp. 135-141.

17. For a more detailed treatment of the characteristics of the high schools, see Wright, pp. 141-143.

18. For greater detail concerning the respondents, see Wright, pp. 143-150.

19. Nall, pp. 28-41. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of David Wright and Rumaldo Juarez in the development of these instruments.

20. These two categories were combined to maintain consistency with the measures utilized in reference to language used in the social situations specified above.

21. Examples of commonly used procedures are such simple dichotomous distinctions as blue collar vs. white collar, professional-managerial vs. others, or NH prestige scores of 70 and above vs. lower scores.

22. Richard M. Stephenson, "Mobility Orientation and Stratification of 1,000 Ninth Graders", American Sociological Review, 22(April, 1957), pp. 204, 212.

23. For a detailed discussion of the classificatory scheme see Wright, "Occupational Orientations..." pp. 52-54. It should be noted that the aspiration categories are more numerous than those for the main breadwinner. This was due to the fact that only one of the main breadwinners was classified as holding "low professional" (teacher, engineer, etc.) or "glamour" (movie star, pro football player, etc.) jobs; however, we desired to maintain these finer distinctions among high level aspirations, since most youth have high goals. Also, due to a low frequency of responses, the operative and unskilled aspiration classes were combined. The "high professional" category includes the traditional professions (doctor, lawyer, scientist, etc.) and other high prestige occupations normally requiring extended formal education beyond a bachelor's degree. In addition, Wright (Table 2) classified farmers as managers and combined the unemployed with the unskilled. In our own analysis, we kept the farmers as a separate category, while following his lead relative to the unemployed (See Tables 4 and 5): tabula-

tions of the frequency distributions of respondents utilized in the analysis to be reported here in this cross-classification are provided in APPENDIX B - Part 2.

24. Wright, p. 76.

25. Wright, pp. 83-84.

26. Katheryn Thomas deserves recognition for her assistance in processing this data and implementing the statistical tests.

27. The level of origin of the respondent -- in terms of family rank as indicated by main breadwinner's job -- determined the number of alternative steps of upward mobility available to him. For instance, youth having professional parents could not aspire to upward mobility in terms of our measures, while youth from low prestige blue collar families had a wide range of possibilities, which represent varying degrees of upward mobility.

28. While it is true Parsons does not specify what population he refers to by Spanish American, it seems certain that Mexican Americans would fall under this rubric: The Social System, p. 199.

29. Among others see Rubel's recent report of a participant observation study in South Texas cited previously. See Wright, "Occupational Orientations..." and Juarez, "Educational Status Orientations" for extensive listings of research in evidence of this point.

30. Of course it could also be possible that our indicator of intergenerational mobility was inadequate. However, we do not believe so and, at any rate, this procedure and related measure is reviewed by Wright, "Occupational Orientations...".

31. Peñalosa found that the upwardly mobile use much less Spanish than the non-upwardly mobile. Of course it is possible, since his subjects were adults, that use of English was correlated with upward mobility after it was achieved, but that prior to this vertical movement it was not.

32. Perhaps ethnicity could better be indicated by including measures of involvement with religion either in terms of patterns of behavior with respect to the church, or in terms of attitudes, or beliefs, or both. Also, ethnicity might be tapped through measures of degree of participation in the other structural aspects of the subculture, such as celebrations, ceremonies, etc.

33. This hypothesis appears to have some support in reasoning from past research. It may be that desire for social achievement does not necessarily imply rejection of all aspects of the particularism-axcription value set. Heller and Skrabanek indicate that Mexican Americans have an unusually strong tendency to retain their subculture, while at the same time Wright and Juarez have shown that a significant number of Mexican American youth do desire upward mobility. Penalosa states that ethnicity, as measured other than through language usage, is not rejected by the upwardly mobile. It can be inferred from these findings that individuals may desire upward mobility and still not reject important aspects of the ethnic subculture.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Ethnic Identification

29. a) Do you speak Spanish? (Circle one number.)

1 Yes | 2 No

If you answered yes, you do speak Spanish, answer the following questions:

b) What language do you usually use when speaking with your parents? (Circle one number.)

1 English 2 Spanish 3 About the same amount of both

c) What language do you usually use when talking with your close friends in your neighborhood? (Circle one number.)

1 English 2 Spanish 3 About the same amount of both

d) What language do you usually use when speaking with your close school friends outside of class? (Circle one number.)

1 English 2 Spanish 3 About the same amount of both

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30. How many of the radio programs you listen to are broadcast in Spanish? (Circle one number.)

1 None 2 Some 3 More-than-half 4 All

---

31. How many of the magazines and newspapers which you read are in Spanish? (Circle one number.)

1 None 2 Some 3 More-than-half 4 All

Mobility Aspirations

Occupational Aspiration

9. If you were completely free to choose any job, what would you desire most as a lifetime job? (In answering this question give an exact job. For example, do not say "work on the railroad" but tell us what railroad job you would like to have.) Write your answer in the box below.

ANSWER:

Family Status

26. What is the main job held by the major money earner of your home? (Write your answer in the following box. Give a specific job, not the company or place worked for.)

ANSWER:

APPENDIX B

Part 1: Ethnic Identification Indicators

Table 1. Language Mexican American Youth Speak with Parents by Sex.

	Male (N=289)	Female (N=307)	Total (N=596)
	percent		
English	5	7	6
Spanish	76	55	65
Same amount of both	19	38	29
TOTAL	100	100	100
No information	1	0	1

$x^2 = 30.28$ df = 2 $P < .001$

Table 2. Language Mexican-American Youth Speak With Close Friends In Their Neighborhood by Sex.

	Male (N=289)	Female (N=307)	Total (N=596)
	percent		
English	11	17	14
Spanish	54	27	40
Same Amount of Both	36	56	46
TOTAL	100	100	100
No information	1	0	1

$x^2 = 43.90$ df = 2 $P < .001$

Table 3. Language Spoken by Mexican American Youth With Close Friends Outside Of Class in School by Sex.

	Male (N=289)	Female (N=307)	Total (N=596)
	percent		
English	20	32	26
Spanish	30	13	21
Same Amount of Both	50	55	53
TOTAL	100	100	100
No information	1	0	1

$x^2 = 26.96$ df = 2 $P < .001$

Table 4. Proportion of Radio Programs Broadcast in Spanish Listened to by Mexican American Youth.

	Male (N=290)	Female (N=307)	Total (N=597)
	percent		
None	27	25	26
Some	54	52	53
More than half	14	16	15
All	5	7	6
TOTAL	100	100	100

$x^2 = 2.03$ df = 3 $.70 < P < .50$

Table 5. Proportion of Mexican American Youth's Reading Time Spent with Spanish Magazines and Newspapers by Sex.

	Male (N=290)	Female (N=307)	Total (N=597)
	percent		
None	64	47	56
Some	33	46	39
More than half*	2	6	4
All*	1	1	1
TOTAL	100	100	100

$x^2 = 18.38$ df = 2 $P < .001$

* Combined for Chi Square analysis.

APPENDIX B

Part 2: Frequency Distribution of Mobility Aspirations.

Table 5. Mexican American Males by Type of Occupational Aspiration and Job of Main Breadwinner.

Main Breadwinner's Job	Occupational Aspirations							
	High Prof.	Low Prof.	Glamour	Manager.	Clerical & Sales	Skilled B. C.	Unskilled	Total
	frequencies							
Professional	4	10	1	1	0	0	1	17
Managerial	7	9	1	4	0	2	2	25
Clerical & Sales	6	7	1	2	3	3	2	24
Skilled B. C.	3	8	5	2	3	16	1	38
Operatives	0	16	1	2	5	10	3	37
Unskilled	7	32	7	8	9	19	13	95
Farmers	2	5	1	1	2	4	1	16
TOTAL	29	87	17	20	22	54	23	252

Table 6. Mexican American Females by Type of Occupational Aspiration and Job of Main Breadwinner.

Main Breadwinner's Job	Occupational Aspiration							
	High Prof.	Low Prof.	Glamour	Manager.	Clerical & Sales	Skilled B. C.	Unskilled	Total
	frequencies							
Professional	2	14	1	0	7	1	0	25
Managerial	0	20	2	0	7	4	0	33
Clerical & Sales	0	15	3	0	10	1	2	31
Skilled B. C.	4	27	3	1	12	4	2	53
Operatives	0	16	3	0	8	0	0	27
Unskilled	2	43	5	2	29	8	0	89
Farmers	1	7	0	0	7	1	0	16
TOTAL	9	142	17	3	80	19	4	274

APPENDIX C: EXTENDED ANALYSIS

Table 5. Mean Ethnic Identification Score of Mexican American Boys and Girls by Nature of Mobility Aspiration and Socio-Economic Status.

Job of Main Breadwinner	Boys			Girls		
	Higher	Same	Lower	Higher	Same	Lower
	Mean Score					
Upper Class:						
Professional	--	12.6	13.0	--	13.5	15.0
Managerial	15.0	17.5	16.0	12.0	--	15.0
Middle Class:						
Clerical & Sales	14.6	16.3	17.4	15.0	16.2	11.7
Skilled B. C.	15.8	15.9	13.0	13.7	13.0	15.0
Lower Class:						
Operatives	17.2	18.3	--	15.3	--	--
Unskilled and Unemp.	16.0	18.5	--	15.7	--	--